

**Remarks of Jane Hock
Connecticut School Teacher
Trumbull Public Schools**

**Before the Education Committee
On S.B. No. 24 - AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS
Sections 29 (teacher tenure), 31 (salaries based on certification), and 33 (superintendent
certification waiver)**

February 21, 2012

Senator Stillman and Representative Fleischmann, and members of the Education Committee.
My name is Jane Hock and I'm a 6th grade science teacher in the Trumbull Public Schools.

I am writing to oppose the proposed education reform in Connecticut. Our state has always had the highest teacher certification requirements and has produced the finest teachers in the country. Presently, teachers continue to improve their skills and learn the newest teaching strategies through years of experience and by obtaining advanced degrees— resulting in more educated teachers that are more prepared to effectively deal with our ever changing student population. Why shouldn't teachers be compensated for such experience and advanced education?

Regarding the tenure debate, new teachers in Connecticut have a four-year probationary period. There is **NO** other job in our economy with such a long probationary period. Normal jobs come with probationary periods of thirty days, sixty days, three months, six months or even a year. During that four-year probationary period a teacher can be fired or let go at any time for any reason. Tenure does not guarantee a teacher's job for life.

I am strongly opposed to the power that would be given to the new State Commissioner of Education— whose education experience lies mostly in Charter Schools. As there is a vast difference in the socioeconomic status within the towns of Connecticut, you cannot have a single evaluation system for all teachers. Teachers face different student challenges within each town. Giving the Commissioner the ability to interfere with existing local board of education members is appalling. These are officials that are **elected** by town citizens and such power given to an **appointed** official sounds more like a monarchy rather than a democracy. Additionally, I question the Commissioner's power to remove an existing superintendent and appoint one **he** "deems" qualified. This will severely limit a superintendent's ability to make educational decisions that he feels will benefit his schools for fear it may not concur with the Commissioner's policies.

I urge you to reject Senate Bill 24. Do not endorse a bill that could jeopardize the future of our educational system and the future of our children.